



WISCONSIN

**DEPARTMENT OF WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT**

Division of Economic Support  
Bureau of Welfare Initiatives

**TO: Economic Support Supervisors  
Economic Support Lead Workers  
Training Staff  
FSET Administrative and Provider Agencies  
Child Care Coordinators  
W-2 Agencies**

**FROM: Stephen M. Dow  
Program Implementation Team  
Policy Analysis and Program Implementation Section**

**BWI OPERATIONS MEMO**

**No.: 99-42**

**File: 1110  
1115**

**Date: 06/10/99**

**Non W-2 [X] W-2 [X] CC [ ]**

**PRIORITY: High**

**SUBJECT: FOOD STAMP AND MEDICAL ASSISTANCE APPLICATIONS**

**CROSS REFERENCE:** Food Stamp Handbook, Appendix, 5.2.0  
Income Maintenance Manual, Chapter I, Part A, 10.0.0, 11.1.0,  
15.0.0, 15.1.1, and 20.1.1

**EFFECTIVE DATE:** Immediately

**PURPOSE**

This memo introduces a new Food Stamp (FS) form and policy which will ensure that all potential Food Stamp applicants are given the opportunity to file an application on the same day they first contact an economic support/W-2 office during office hours. The memo also reviews established policy on FS applications, expedited issuance, re-applications, and records retention.

**BACKGROUND**

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) recently visited Wisconsin to review the process for application, eligibility determination and issuance of FS. As a result of their review, DES has developed a new form and process which will ensure that all requests for FS and/or Medical Assistance (MA) have the filing date set on the first day the request is made. **DES is also taking this opportunity to remind counties, tribes and W-2 agencies about policies that have already been mandated, but should be reviewed and emphasized at this time.**

**NEW POLICY**

All applicants have the right to file an application for FS on the day of their first contact with a county, tribal, or W-2 agency. Attached to this Operations Memo is a copy of a new form, DES-11605 (Application Form for Medicaid and Food Stamps, Part 1 - Registration). Use this form when an applicant or potential applicant comes into the office, requests FS or Medicaid, but cannot stay to complete Client Registration in CARES because of their schedule or because there is not sufficient time or personnel to complete

Client Registration before the office closes to the public. Mail (if the applicant calls) or hand the form to the applicant. The date the signed Application Part 1 form is turned into the office is the filing date.

A small supply of the new form will be printed and distributed to Milwaukee County and Milwaukee W-2 agencies in the near future. All agencies can order the forms from the State beginning in August 1999. The form will be published to the Intranet within a week of the date of this OM and counties, tribes and agencies can print a supply as needed.

***Enter the Application form into CARES on the same day or by the next business day, and schedule a face-to-face eligibility interview.***

If CARES determines that the applicant is entitled to an expedited appointment for his or her eligibility interview, schedule it that day or the next business day to allow issuance of expedited FS within 7 calendar days from the date of the application (see below).

Continue to allow applicants to call the office and fill out Client Registration in CARES by phone, then mail out the printed form, and set the filing date on the day the signed Client Registration form is returned to the office. Agencies should schedule an eligibility interview when the form is returned.

Use the paper Combined Application Form (CAF) DES-2035, only for prospective applicants for whom the face-to-face interview can be waived. All agencies should have a supply of CAFs available.

## ***CURRENT POLICY REVIEW***

Inform all applicants that they have the right to file an FS application on the day of their first contact with a county, tribal or W-2 agency. Inform all applicants that they have the right to apply for expedited FS benefits and, if found eligible, to receive an expedited FS allotment within 7 calendar days from the date of application.

Intake workers must complete all of Client Registration in CARES, including CRES, which will indicate to the worker, after the screen is entered, whether the applicant is entitled to an expedited appointment for his or her eligibility interview. If the person is entitled to an expedited interview, schedule the interview for that day or the next business day.

When the county, tribal or W-2 agency is open to the public, for any reason, a potential applicant must be allowed to apply for FS benefits. Therefore, if the agency is open during the evening to conduct recertification interviews with clients, a potential applicant must be able to apply for FS. If the agency does not have sufficient personnel available to accept applications, the new short paper Application Part 1 form and process should be used. If the agency is open only to employees, potential applicants do not have to be provided the opportunity to apply for FS.

Retain all FS records for at least three years from the month of the closed date for all assistance groups, and those records must be available for audit activities and review. Please refer to Operations Memo 99-37 for record retention standards, procedures and exceptions.

DES continues to emphasize that, if an individual asks for FS or Medicaid, s/he must be allowed to apply and set the filing date whether or not the person is in the correct office or region. If the person is not in the correct office or region, complete Client Registration in CARES, schedule an eligibility interview in the correct office, transfer the case, and give the client notice of the appointment and location.

Any break in service in an FS case means that the person/group must reapply for benefits. This re-application is considered a new FS application, even when the case is closed for less than 30 days. FS benefits must be pro-rated from the date the signed Application, Part 1 is received in the FS office or the eligibility interview is held whichever is first. CARES is programmed to pro-rate those benefits. If an individual does not complete their review before the end of their certification period, and then comes into the office to request a "review", complete the eligibility interview in CARES if possible. If the eligibility interview cannot be scheduled that day have the individual fill out, sign, and return to the office the new Application, Part 1 form. The date the form is signed and returned is the date that should be entered on ACPA as the request date. If the individual calls the FS office, inform the person that s/he must come into

the office to fill out, sign, and return the Application, Part 1 form in order to set their request date for FS. If they do not fill out and return the form, the request date on ACPA will be the date of the eligibility interview.

The only exceptions are if the break in service is caused by agency action, such as the client requests an appointment before the end of his or her certification period but no recertification appointment is available before the case closes, or if the group contains a member who was a migrant and received FS in the previous thirty days. In those instances, the worker should document in CARES the reason for the late recertification and set the request date on ACPA for the first of the month so that there is no pro-ration of benefits.

Agencies must document all actions in CARES either on specific screens or on the Case Comment screens and document according to policy contained in the **FS Handbook, Income Maintenance Manual**, or Operations Memos.

## **CONTACTS**

For questions regarding this Operations Memo please contact the Call Center at 608-261-6317.